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THE DONATISTS.

BY DR. EVANS.—THE SUBSTANCE OF A LECTURE TO THE STUDENTS AT BURY.

(Continued from page 27.)

In these circumstances the Donatists appealed to the Emperor. They asked that the matter in dispute should be submitted to the Bishops of Gaul as probably the most impartial in the Empire. They could not help feeling that the monarch had acted under false impressions, and that if all the facts were laid before him, his opinion would be modified. Mistaken men—they little knew the extent of the power which was growing up behind the throne, and of the intense feeling of hostility which rankled in the breasts of his spiritual advisers. The request was granted. Five of the French Bishops, ten Italian, with the Bishop of Rome at their head, were to adjudicate in this matter. Before this prejudiced assembly the parties were to plead. The conference met in 313, and after three days sitting, the sentence was given in favour of Cœcilianus. The issue might have been anticipated. It was a mistake, on the part of dissidents, to ask the men committed, in some degree, to the case of their opponents, to judge in the affair. Other councils were held but in vain. From these issues most Historians, of this period, have branded them with guilt, with the wildest enthusiasm and obstinacy. On the contrary we venture to think that a candid mind, free from church prejudice, and judging impartially, will not only not greatly wonder at these issues, but will regard them as partial and unjust. It could scarcely be otherwise. Let us look at the case for a moment or two.

The Donatists were only a small body, though probably the largest in the province, yet compared with the mass of the professed church, they were emphatically so. Their position was one of antagonism. They were contending against this body for purity of discipline and the independence of the church of Christ from secular control. They declined to recognise the Christian character of any who remained in communion with the great body, chiefly, because of its apostacy from the truth, unless they were re-baptised by themselves. By implication, and subsequently they refused to admit the right of the civil power to interfere with the church. Spiritual things belonged only to the spiritual. In some of these views they were sustained by the example and writings of the great African prelate Cyprian, against the lapsed, and all but the universal view of the great evil of sin after baptism. Such in brief was their case. On the

contrary, their opponents had long been in practice adverse to these opinions of Cyprian, and the North African churches were now luxuriating in the bounty of the head of the Empire. They had already sold their birthright for a mess of potage. Those of the Donatists clashed with them now. They were in point of fact adjudicating on the truth or error of their own creed. Constantine found certain dogmas prevelant in the church, and, when taking it under the Imperial protection had accepted them himself. He was surrounded, moreover, with men whose spiritual influence with him was all powerful, and who had everything at stake dear to men of their class if the Donatists prevailed. Besides the Emperor had already from *ex parte* evidence pronounced an opinion in a way which could not be mistaken. In some cases civilians—men utterly unfit for the position—were appointed to judge the conflicting claims of the parties called before them, and it is not too much to suppose that their decision would be in harmony with the known opinion of their master and his courtly teachers. And let it be remembered that the decision involved was fearful to a man of Constantine's temperament and position. It might indeed, if given in favour of the Donatists, revolutionise the dominant hierarchy, if not endanger the stability of the throne. In circumstances like these no other decision could be expected. Cases, in many respects, parallel to these have occurred in the History of English Nonconformity; and a similar judgment would be pronounced now were certain professed Christian men called to adjudicate on our claims.

But the church had others in reserve, and she did not hesitate to use them. What the spiritual sword had failed to do, the temporal must accomplish. Not now for the first time had she invoked the aid of the civil power. But now more energetically than in the case of Paul of Samosata. As Pontifex Maximus Constantine attempted to force their obedience. At the point of the sword he sought to secure the outward unity of the church. Their places of worship were closed, their bishops and leading men were exiled, some imprisoned, and some suffered death, and all the horrors and sufferings followed which excited passions and self interest could inflict. Their happy homes were desolated. Domestic ties violated; and the rude soldiers, not weaned from their idolatrous practices, would revel in the bloody service they had to perform. But the guilt of such a procedure must rest on the dominant faction. The infamy of this unholy crusade, against sincere and holier men than themselves, must rest on the apostate church. They shed their blood in vain. The Donatists, in the main, were firm. Their holy and consistent lives and their unmerited sufferings called forth the sympathies of the people. A class of men whom their adversaries try to identify with the body of the Donatists, but about whom there is much doubt, just as the troubles in Germany, the frightful ideas of Munster, are laid to the charges of Ana-baptists by Luther and his friends, to their perpetual disgrace, called Circumcilians who retaliated on the persecutors. They called themselves Agonistici, or the champions of God. This was by no means the first time they had engaged in what they would regard as a Holy war. They had before manifested, with the fiery zeal of the African, great hostility against idolatry. Some of these men were of social importance, and by there efforts against Paganism, had exposed themselves to sufferings and some to death. They now threw the shield of their protection around these Christian sufferers, and acted with great severity, no doubt in some cases, against the Church of the State. After years of suffering and blood, the Emperor fearing the results of this civil strife, and finding how powerless it was on the dissidents, gave liberty to the sufferers, recalled their exiles, restored their churches, and allowed them freedom of worship.

The successor of Constantine to whom this part of the Empire was assigned was not disposed to this line of policy. Other means were used, no doubt suggested by the spiritual advisers of the Prince. The wealth of the Imperial Treasury was employed to win the Donatists to unity with their oppressors. These, worldly minded men—doubtless judging of others by themselves—had

the folly to imagine that wealth and court favour could win men from the truth who had suffered the loss of all things for it. They were unmoved by the gilded bubble. Irritated by their firmness, the armed bands of the Emperor were commanded to fall upon the people as they gathered in the House of Prayer. Their churches were again closed, their ministers exiled or slain, and the long list of martyrs was greatly augmented, and the anniversaries of their deaths were celebrated with intense fervour. In 347 the persecution raged with increased violence, and every effort which wealth could suggest, and power enforce, was made to weaken the influence of the Bishops, and to allure the timid and half-hearted to the Catholic communion. In some few cases success marked their efforts, but on the mass they utterly failed. Under Julian their prospects brightened, and he granted them religious freedom. During succeeding years their history varied. According to the passions or the prejudices excited and strengthened by the spiritual authorities in power, of the men who swayed the Imperial sceptre, were they treated. The materials of their history —scanty though they be—frequently remind us of scenes which have marked the history of our own body, we all laud. Only to one other event in this chequered life can we refer.

Towards the close of this century, Augustine of Hippo was rising into note. He had been a Manichæan, but was now identified with the ruling power in the church. He was a man of great mental powers and of equal confidence in them. He was vain enough to say, that he could convert the separatists, if only he could get them to debate the matter in dispute. After long efforts and much suffering, the challenge was accepted. The place of meeting was Carthage about the year 411, and to be under the presidency of the Tribune Marcellinus, according to the edict of the Emperor. Two hundred and eighty-six prelates on the Catholic side, and two hundred and seventy-nine on that of the Donatists, assembled on the occasion. Alone the latter met, only in the full consciousness of the rectitude of their conduct and the Scriptural purity of their principles; the others, probably with equal confidence in the truth of their cause, but with many indications of the Imperial favour. Into details of this dispute we cannot enter, and can only say, that from the information we possess it turned on two points; the original one, whether Felix and Cœcilianus were Traditors; the other on the essential purity of Christian communion. As Neander says, "as was to be expected, the Imperial commission decided in favour of the courtly party, and immediately new edicts were issued, severer if possible than the former ones, banishing the ministers from their homes and their people, and imposing pecuniary fines on the members of their churches unless they conformed."

We have seen already that on the great doctrines of the gospel their faith was in harmony with the strictest orthodoxy. They are never in the pages of their contemporaries branded as heretics—only as the great schismatics of the age. But on matters involved in this controversy, their creed has been more fixed and clear. The experience of the past had exerted an influence of no mean kind. The following may be regarded as a fair summary of them:—

1. The purity and spirituality of the church. "They held," says Neander, "that the church should cut off from its body those who were known by open and flagrant sins to be unworthy members."

2. They baptised all who sought their communion from their opponents. They have been represented by some, as harmonising with our own views on this matter. I am not quite sure of this. No doubt about their re-baptising all they received from the Catholics, no doubt about their immersing all their converts from the world; about children's baptism I am not so confident. At this period it was wide spreading no doubt. There is a sentence or two in Augustine on this matter which would induce the impression that the baptism of infants was rejected by them. It can scarcely be understood on any other ground:—"Do you ask for Divine authority though that which the whole church practices is very reasonably believed to be no other than a thing

delivered by the apostles, yet we may take a true estimate of how much the sacrament of Baptism does profit infants by the circumcision which God's former people received."* Such was the mighty reason this master in Israel could assign for a practice which the Divine word nowhere recognises. Towards the close of this century, in 397, the question was asked in an African synod, "What should be done with those who, in their infancy, had been baptised by the Donatists, and who in after years sought fellowship with the church?" Either this referred to some minor division, into which the body split, or, like the Waldenses, they differed in practice in later times.

3. The perfect independence of the church of the State.

4. Against Augustine's pleading for the right of the State to punish error and repress schism they pleaded for liberty of conscience. This position Augustine and Optatus tried hard to overthrow, but in vain. The former frequently proceeded on assumptions, laid down false principles of interpretation, confounded the visible with the invisible church of Christ, and affirmed of the former what is only true of the latter. Hence he says, "No one attains to salvation and eternal life who has not Christ for his head; but no one can have Christ for a head who does not belong to his body, which is the church." Again, "The entire Christ is the head and the body:—the head is the only begotten Son of God; and the body is the Church. He who agrees not with the Scriptures in the doctrine concerning the head, although he may stand in external communion with the church, notwithstanding belongs not to her. But, however, he that holdeth not to all that Scripture teacheth, respecting the head, and yet cleaves not to the the unity of the church belongs not to her."† Such was the fancy of this profound theologian. These notions were prevalent in the community to which Augustine belonged at this time. They are the source of the Papal dogma now, that out of the church their is no salvation. We should admit the principle, but deny their conclusions. The Augustenian dogma is based on a fallacy, and one wonders his acute mind did not see it. It is true of the invisible church of Christ; separate from that, there can be no salvation; but it's false, absolutely and eternally false, that separation from a certain organisation, which men may call the church, involves eternal death. The teaching of the inspired volume is simple. Men must be Christians before they are fit for membership with any visible church. It is not their joining any given ecclesiastical organisation which makes them Christians, but the receiving of the heart by the energy of the Divine Spirit.

Dr. Arnold has some just remarks on this matter:—"This is Priestcraft because it lays the stress not on the relation of man's heart towards God and Christ, as the gospel does, but on something artificial and formal—his belonging to a certain so called society; and this—whether the society be alive or dead—whether it really helps the man in goodness or not—still it seems to step in and interpose itself as the channel of grace and salvation, where it certainly is not the channel of salvation, because it is visibly and notoriously no safe channel of grace. Whereas all who go straight to Christ without thinking of the church do manifestly and truly receive grace, and have the seal of the Holy Spirit, and therefore are certainly heirs of salvation."‡ Principles like these held by this large body of non-conformists from the popular church would render the reasoning of the great theologian practically powerless.

I will only add that failing these efforts, other means were employed to force their consciences and compel submission to the ruling powers. Emperor after Emperor inflicted fines for their so called obstinacy, closed their places of worship, banished their teachers, and punished many of them with imprisonment and death, but in vain. The doctrine of persecuting error by the civil power was common. The contending parties in the church held it firmly and practised it with a vigour little inferior to that which agitated the empire when Pagan. Even that idol of the church, Constantine, threatened immediate death

* Quoted by Wall—Hist. Infant Bap. p. 106. † Neander, Vol. III. 374. ‡ Life, &c., Vol. II. 469.

to individuals who retained a copy of the writings of Arius. It is a blot on the fame of Augustine that he vindicated and encouraged this diabolical spirit. Amidst the confusions, the awful errors, and the misery of the fifth century they struggled on. Of this period of their history we know but little. We can trace their existence, by a dim light, amidst the increasing moral darkness which was gathering over the land to the sixth century; and soon after the light of the gospel was extinguished in this unhappy country, and Mahomedan superstition with its soul destroying power has brooded over it, till the church, within the last half century, has tried to dissipate the thick cloud.

*** Sources of information:—"Robinson's Hist. of Bapt." Not safe. "Townsend's Civil and Sacred Hist." Very partial—dissent at all times a great crime with him. "Longe's Hist. of the Donatists." "Eusebius E. Hist." "Du Pin IV. Cent." "Neander III. Vol." And as candid as you can expect from a man of his ecclesiastical opinions. "Orchard's Foreign Baptists."

A WARNING VOICE.

"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall."

I HAVE endeavoured for nearly sixty years to teach the doctrines of distinguishing grace, which the apostles preached, and for which the martyrs died. I love them still, and until I have found a system better adapted to secure the salvation of a sinner, or bring glory to God, I hope that I shall continue to love them and to preach them. My aim has been to speak of Jesus not only as a Saviour from the penalty, but also from the dominion of sin. And in this Paul has been my model. Writing to Titus, he says, "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present evil world. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

In the course of my ministry, I have known some preachers whose conduct has been blameless, but whose mode of stating divine truth has seemed almost to encourage sin, as if they would thereby make grace to abound. They have ignored precepts, as belonging only to an Arminian creed, and have forgotten that those who are "not under the law, but under grace," are "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ." The fact is that believers are no longer directed to Sinai, as if the law were now a covenant of works by which eternal life may be secured; but to Calvary, where Christ the king in Zion wields the sceptre, and enjoins his loving followers to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and to run with patience the race that is set before them. Looking unto Jesus." This is the teaching of the New Testament, and will, I believe, be received by those who "being made free from sin, are become the servants of God, and have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

I should grieve, if I thought that anything I have written, or may write in these pages should lessen the reader's attachment to the doctrine of salvation by the righteousness of Christ alone, irrespective of any work or worthiness of the creature. While, however, we must have that, as our title to heaven, we must not forget that "without holiness, no man shall see God." Paul's words are—"The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you—but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

"Then shall we best proclaim abroad,
The honours of our Saviour God;
When the salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin."

I have been led to these remarks by an incident with which I became acquainted during a pastorate of fifty years. It occurred many years since; but it will never be forgotten by me. It was a useful lesson to me and it may be useful to others as a beacon to warn them of unsuspected danger; or as a finger post, guiding some fallen brother to the cross, where alone the penitent backslider may find peace. Should this prove interesting I may be induced to furnish other incidents from my portfolio.

I had not been a pastor in London more than two or three years, when I received a visit from a member of my church. She was young, but was generally regarded as an advanced Christian. I received her kindly, though I fancied from her manner that our interview would be anything but gratifying. And so it proved. After a few common place remarks, she came rather abruptly to the object of her visit. It was to tell me that she was unable to profit by my ministry, and intended to leave the church. I said in reply, "that I rather wondered, so many profited by what I preached, and that the church was just now in so happy and prosperous a state." I added also the following question —"To what do you attribute your want of profit, is it that I preach error?" She answered me without any hesitation—"No, sir, I wish you did. I have been carefully watching you for a long time. If I could have detected that, I should have a better excuse for leaving the church; but I have discovered no error." I told her that, "if she heard me with that feeling, it was no wonder that her soul was unprofited and unblessed." I then asked her what she wanted, the absence of which prevented her from receiving profit by my ministry. Her answer was in the following words:—"It is not what you say, but what you do not say, that makes me dissatisfied." I pressed her to tell me what that was, assuring her that "if I could conscientiously say it, she should hear it on next Lord's Day." I was struck almost dumb when she said—"I like, sir, to hear the minister say—*Sin can do the believer no harm; it so greatly honours the grace of God!*"

I do not know whether she blushed as she said it, but I am quite sure that I did, when I heard her utter these words. "Is it possible," I asked "that any minister of Christ dares to utter a statement so opposed to the teaching of the Lord, or of his apostles as that is?" She told me his name and the place where he preached. I know him now, but he has long since given up such unscriptural views, and has adopted other sentiments more in harmony with the teaching of the New Testament. It would do the reader no good were I to mention his name. He is now laid aside from public labours, and would, I am quite sure, be grieved if he were told of the evil which his unguarded utterances occasioned.

When I recovered from the painful emotion occasioned by her extraordinary avowal, I told her that I sincerely hoped I should never be permitted to utter anything so opposed to all I had hitherto learned. I assured her that I had no hesitation in declaring the immutability of Jehovah's purpose, and the security of the sheep of Christ, being fully "persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." I reminded her also that Jesus prayed for his disciples that "they might be kept from the evil," and that

> "Immortal principles forbid
> The child of God to sin."

The visit ended, and she left me, intending as I supposed to seek her admission to the church where the preaching was more in unison with her views than mine. But she continued to attend, though irregularly, and thus retained her membership. In this way some months passed. I often thought of her, and felt that she was in the road which John Bunyan has properly named "Danger," and that unless the "Good Shepherd" interposed to preserve her, it would

lead her on to "Destruction." Perhaps I ought to have seen her, and have endeavoured to convince her of the danger to which her erroneous views exposed her. But there was something so chilling in her manner, as if she fancied that her attainments removed her far beyond any thing I knew, that I shrunk from the idea of another meeting.

Nearly a year had gone when one of my deacons told me that he had directed sister C. not to come to the Lord's Table. The service was just commencing, and his words were forgotten by me until the next morning, when the servant informed me that she wished to see me. I immediately recalled the communication I had received from the deacon, and concluded that in some way the visit was connected with what he had said. But I little imagined the whole truth, and was ill prepared for the painful scene which followed. Such a visit I never had, and I sincerely hope I never may have another like it. She sat perhaps on the very chair she occupied just twelve months before; but oh, how changed! Instead of the self confident manner she then displayed, her eyes were cast down, and she was weeping bitterly. The change was so great, that I enquired with great anxiety, what was the cause of her grief. She seemed surprised that I was not already acquainted with it, and then told me the sad tale, frequently interrupted by almost heart rending sobs, how the young man who admired, or pretended to admire the preaching to which I have referred, had induced her to accompany him. She had adopted the sentiments of the preacher, neglected prayer, and indulged in many worldly follies, until he took advantage of her misplaced confidence. Having succeeded in his wicked designs his promise of marriage was forgotten, and he had left her to suffer her shame alone. I am reminded of a paragraph in one of my tracts which was written some years since—it is as follows:—"A sinful course may be compared to the decent of a tower by winding stairs. You see before you two or three only, and fancy that they are all, yet they lead to others, and will as surely bring you to the bottom as if the whole had been visible at the first." Alas! she found it so. Doctrinal errors paved the way to errors in practice. Slight deviations from the path of duty led to yet greater evils, until she found herself deeply sunk in the mire, where her Christian character once so bright, became involved in darkness and almost in despair.

I reminded her of our previous interview just twelve months before, when she thought that God was glorified when preachers affirmed that *sin can do the believer no harm*. "Oh sir!" she said, "statements like those have led me into my present misery. I was led to believe that the more an individual sinned, the more the grace of God was magnified in his salvation. I see it all now; I was sinning, that grace might abound." I asked her whether she would wish me to utter such a sentiment now. Her reply was, and it was said with much warmth of feeling:—"If you did, I would stand up, and before all the people say that *it is Satan's lie!*"

She was excluded from the church, but she was not withdrawn from. There were those who had known and loved her in former days, and many of them loved her still. They believed that she would again be restored to her former position, and be enabled to lean on Jesus and live to his glory. In her despondency we reminded her of the gracious invitation to backsliding Israel, where God says,—"Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding;" but she put away every word of encouragement, saying that she had sinned against light and knowledge. That she was justly rejected by the Lord, and that he would finally say to her, "Depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Her's was indeed "a wounded spirit." "Neither sun nor stars in many days appeared." We feared that "God had forgotten to be gracious, and had in anger shut up his tender mercies."

We must pass in silence several intervening weeks during which her sufferings, both mentally and bodily, were great. It may be truly said that "her soul chose strangling rather than life;" but her life was preserved. Yet the shock her constitution received had so enfeebled her that her friends were

unable to entertain any hope of her ultimate recovery. This, however, occasioned her no regret. Life had lost all its charms, and the earnest longing of her soul was that the Lord would favour her with some token of his forgiving love, and then take her to that world where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." She had occasionally glimpses of light, for which she was truly grateful, but they were few and far between. She proved that "the way of transgressors is hard!"

Those who were much with her during her illness believed that her repentance was sincere, and that she found peace as Mary Magdalene at the cross. "We have," said the apostle, "redemption through the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." But this we can affirm, that she never again spoke lightly of sin, for it now appeared to her as "That abominable thing that God hates," and she hated it too.

I have but little more to say. The subject of this brief narrative lived only a few months after the event just recorded. She was not without hope that God had forgiven her, but she never forgave herself. In reference to the unscriptural and dangerous statement of the minister, and the strange delusion that he was magnifying the grace of God, she used to say, "I wonder that I was ever led away by it. I ought to have remembered what sin had done—expelling our first parents from Eden—kindling the fires of hell—inflicting agony and death on the Son of God. Alas! it has brought darkness and despair into my conscience. These, if not her very words, are their import. And she would say also to those around her, "Beware of error; beware of sin—the one leadeth to the other!"

Reader, the first lie was invented by the devil. When the woman said,—"We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. The serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die." He said it wickedly, knowing that he uttered a lie. Perhaps the minister believed, when he perverted, as he did the doctrines of the Holy Book, that he was magnifying the grace of God; but it was a lie. Eve found out the former, and the young woman, to her cost, found out the latter. And so shall we, unless we are "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." Let us therefore pray as the Saviour bids us: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen."

C. W.

A FUTURE STATE.

It was beautifully said by Mr. Prentice:—"It cannot be that earth is man's only abiding place. It cannot be that our life is a bubble, cast up by the ocean of eternity, to float a moment upon its waves and sink into nothingness. Else why is it that the high and glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts, are wandering about unsatisfied for ever? Why is it that the rainbow and the cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off and leave us to muse upon their faded loveliness? Why is it that the stars which hold their festival around the midnight throne are set above the grasp of our limited faculties; forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? And finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and then taken from us; leaving the thousand streams of affection to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts? We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread out before us like islands that slumber on the ocean, and where the beautiful beings which here pass before us like shadows will stay in our presence for ever."

Equally forcible is the following illustration from the American Sunday School World:—"David Rittenhouse, of Pennsylvania, was a great astronomer. He was skilful in measuring the size of planets and determining the position

of the stars. But he found that, such was the distance of the stars, that a silk thread stretched across the glass of his telescope would entirely cover a star; and moreover, that a silk fibre, however small, placed upon the same glass, would cover so much of the heavens that the star, if a small one and near the pole, would remain obscured behind that silk fibre several seconds. Thus a silk fibre appeared to be larger in diameter than a star.

"You know that every star is a heavenly world, a world of light, a sun shining upon other worlds as our sun shines upon this world. Our sun is eight hundred and eighty-two thousand miles in diameter, and yet, seen from a distant star, our sun could be covered, obscured, hidden behind a thread, when that thread is near the eye, although in a telescope.

"Just so we have seen some who never could behold the heavenly world. They always complained of dimness of vision, dulness of comprehension, when they looked in a heavenly direction. You might strive to comfort them in affliction, in poverty, or distress; but no, they could not see Jesus as the Sun of Righteousness. You might direct their eyes to the Star of Bethlehem through the telescope of faith and holy confidence; but alas! there is a secret thread, a filament, a silken fibre, which, holding them in subserviency to the world, in some way obscures the light, and Jesus, the Star of Hope, is eclipsed, and their hope darkened. There are times when a very small self-gratification, a very little love of pleasure, a very small thread, may hide the light. To some sinners, Jesus, as a Saviour, appears far off; but far off as he may appear, he certainly can be and will be seen where the heart lets nothing intervene."

And very striking is the following from the "American Christian Advocate:"—"It is said of Demosthenes that, speaking to the Athenians on a very serious subject, and finding them to be very inattentive, he paused and told them that he had something of importance to relate, which he was anxious that they should all hear. Silence being thus obtained, and every eye fixed on the speaker, he said that two men, having bargained for the hire of an ass, were travelling from Athens to Megara on a very hot day, and both of them striving to enjoy the shadow of the ass; one of them said that he had hired the ass and the shadow too; the other said that he hired the ass only, and not the shadow. Having made this grave statement, Demosthenes retired, when the people pressed him with great eagerness to return and finish the tale. 'O ye Athenians,' said he, 'will ye attend to me when speaking about the shadow of an ass, and will ye not attend to me when I address you on the most important subjects?' How true. Men of the world have an ear for vanity, but not for words of wisdom. To the things of the world they give fixed attention, but to Christ and his salvation they are utterly indifferent."

THE WAY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

"And the soul of the people was much discouraged, because of the way."—Num. xxi. 4.

THE above words were spoken concerning the Israelites and the way which they were travelling from Egypt to Canaan. Their journey illustrates the pilgrimage of saints from earth to heaven. As they were miraculously delivered, fed, guided, and sustained; illustrating what God does for his people now; it is reasonable to expect that in their journey there will be some illustrations of the difficulties also connected with the Christian life. We are not surprised that man will present one side of a cause which he is advocating, and that the fairest, the best, and the most attractive, because he is imperfect. A merchant may exhibit the best samples of his wares. A soldier who is seeking recruits may extol the pleasures of the service, the glory of heroes, and the great rewards which may follow; but he may say nothing of the privations and hardships which may attend a foreign campaign, or of the possibility of falling on the field of battle. The man who writes an autobiography may present the fairest side of his life.

It is an unenviable, and worse than wasted life, in which their are no days, words, and acts that can be mentioned with pleasure and satisfaction. There are green spots even in a barren desert. The laudable acts of life may be brought into great prominence, but the dark blots and fearful falls may be toned down as leaning to virtue's side, or be totally unmentioned. God is perfect—he gives a faithful picture. If he shows us the excellencies of David, he shows us his defects also. If he shows us what he did for the Israelites, illustrating what he does for his people now; he shows us also their discouragements, which illustrate the difficulties with which Christians meet in their way to the Canaan above.

1. It is important to notice the way the Israelites trod, as it illustrates the Christian pilgrimage.

The way of the Israelites was the path in which they were led from Egypt to Canaan; from the land of bondage to the land which flowed with milk and honey. It was a way through a desert—a barren lonely place. It was a way surrounded by fiery serpents and scorpions, the way which God led his people by the pillar of a cloud by day, and by the pillar of a fire by night. When and where the pillar went, there they went. When and where it stopped, there they stopped. So the Christian path is the way from a world of sin, bondage, and misery; to the world of purity, light, and perfect bliss. It is the way in which saints are led by the word and the spirit of God. Where God leads, there they must go. Where he says stop, there they must stay. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

The way to heaven to which the word and the Spirit of God point, is a way of faith. Christ is the object of faith. He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is the way to the favour of God, to his approving presence, and to admission into heaven above. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John xiv. 6). If any man is to come to God, he must walk in the way. He must come sinful, helpless, lost,—"ready to perish,"—to the cross of Jesus. He must plead Christ—his suffering, his blood, his death—as the foundation of his hope of acceptance with God. All who thus walk in the way, God forgives and justifies. The heavenly way, is a way of obedience. All who follow God must bow to his authority. They must be prepared to resign their will to the will of God. They must be willing to follow, not determined to lead, willing to go where God points by his Spirit and his word. He points to the footsteps, the ordinances, the love, the consecration, and the self-sacrifice of Christ. Jesus says, "follow me." The best saint is not to be followed, only so far as he follows Christ. Jesus the perfect one is to be the model at which every Christian is to aim.

The way to heaven is comparatively lonely. It admits all who are willing to walk in it; but man by nature is unwilling to go in it. It is a way that admits all who are willing to forsake their old wicked ways, and their old wicked companions; all who are vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, who pant after a holy atmosphere, holy worship, holy society; and who strongly desire the purity and the perfection of heaven. There are, however, comparatively but few who are willing to go. All who travel the heavenly road must be prepared to part company with those whose hearts are in the wicked world. Lot's wife looked back into the doomed city, her heart was with the wicked citizens. She became a pillar of salt. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"—(Matt. vii. 14). The way to heaven is through a desert world. Strange and unnatural would the man be, who could settle down and be contented to dwell perpetually in a desert. There, society is rare. In such a place sweet music, sweet fruits, sweet and beautiful flowers are scarce. There may be the prowling bear, the ferocious tiger, and the hissing serpent. So, this world to a saint is but a desert. The church "is coming up out of the wilderness." Spiritual society, trees, fruits, flowers, and heavenly music are the exceptions. Entire heaven will not be found in this desert world. There may be the prowling

destroyer, there may be ferocious tigers, and hissing serpents in the shape of men. The way to heaven is through the desert.

2. The Israelites were discouraged in the way to Canaan.

The way in the desert was circuitous. Bread and water which were not supernaturally provided were scarce. The serpents were not far from the untrodden path. The greatest obstacle of all was, their spirits were rebellious. The way itself was the right one, because it was divinely marked out, and it would have been comparatively easy and happy if the people had trusted in their Maker, and had been obedient to his will. Their discouragements were generally the results of their rebellious spirits and ways. So the way to heaven is a clear, plain, strait, prosperous, and happy way; but man's unbelief and perverseness are followed by discouragements. A traveller's course in a foreign land might be straight, clear, and easy; but if he should begin to trade in that country, to observe the idolatrous practices of the people; and if he should give himself up to enjoy the various scenes of amusement and pleasure, he would not go very quickly on his journey. He would be impeded and injured in his course by the surroundings. So the road to heaven is a straight, clear, and happy one. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." But even saints are so prone to yield to the surroundings, that they become tainted and injured by the idolatrous and iniquitous practices of the world. The depravity within themselves, is one of the surroundings. Every Christian has the divine nature within him. He abhors the evil and loves the good; but he has the old man within him also. He "finds a law in his members which wars against the law of his mind." If any Christian should listen to this enemy, and yield to its dictates in imagination, in thought, and in deed, if he should begin to trade with it, he will soon find himself discouraged. No man, he may think, is so sinful as I. He may be led to doubt his Christianity. The apostle Paul was as devout as most disciples, and he had to exclaim, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24).

There are external enemies which discourage the souls of saints. The great enemy of souls "goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." All the sources of temptation to evil may be under his control. They may be but nets or traps in which to catch unwary souls. Wicked men—men who belong to this foreign, heathen world, may laugh at the peculiarities, the scrupulosity, the language, and at the ways of saints. Their self-denial and self-sacrifice may be denounced as the highest degree of folly. They may be pronounced fanatical or insane; and may be called to suffer loss. "They," (the wicked) "think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." If the minds of saints were staid upon God, external enemies would affect them but little. A storm might rage without, the snow or the rain might fall profusely, or the wind might blow, but if a man keeps in doors, he will not be much affected. It is when he goes out of his house that he is injured. So, if the mind of a saint should go out to the enemies which make a storm, if he should begin either to mingle, or to trade with them, he will be discouraged.

The fact that the road to heaven is comparatively solitary is not a most encouraging thought. If a road be thronged with travellers, a timid person would not be afraid to walk in it. A man would be desperate and outrageous that would rob or injure a traveller in the face of a multitude. If a road be lonely, it is dreaded, especially in the dark. A timid individual imagines that the enemy may be lurking in some secret place, ready to rob or to destroy. So the road to heaven might be considered more attractive and pleasant, if the travellers in it were more numerous. If all our neighbours and friends, if all the rich, the learned, and the great were walking in it, it might be considered attractive. Then, we are apt to think, we might be better able to contend against the enemies which may be ready to rob, to insult, or to destroy. Union is strength. Still, is it not far better to go to heaven, solitary, having to fight

against a host single handed, than to go with the multitude to hell? "The friendship of the world, is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God". (James iv 4). Some painful trial may be a discouragement. The sun of prosperity may cease to shine. The dark cloud may overshadow. The strong constitution may be prostrated by affliction. There may be great loss of property; or the dearest earthly friend may be laid in the grave. Messenger after messenger, like wave after wave, may come, as in the case of Job, bearing more distressing tidings. We may not understand the reason for these trials in this state, and if faith in the fidelity and goodness of God should be weak, the soul will be discouraged. "Thou hidest thy face, and we are troubled." Still, is it not better to go through the severest ordeal to the perfect state above, than to go in carnal pleasure to perdition?

It is discouraging, especially to young Christians, to behold indifference and deadness in those who are older. Zeal and vivacity distinguish young Christians. They burn with love to Christ, and with zeal for the salvation of perishing men. They may suppose, as it is said of Melancthon, that they can convert the world. They soon however find, that "old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon." Their burning zeal becomes modified by the disappointments of life. While in the warmth of their new-born life, if they behold a Christian who has scarcely ever a word for Christ, who is rarely ever at a prayer meeting, they are discouraged. They look at imperfect man for a father, instead of looking to Christ. Following him, our zeal will never flag. His life was one of incessant activity.

3. There are some encouragements, and these counterbalance all the discouragements. If there were nothing but discouragements, saints would sink in despair; but walking in God's way, we have God with us. The pillar of a cloud and of fire was the symbol of the divine presence to the Israelites in the desert. Although surrounded by serpents and scorpions, following the "pillar" they were perfectly safe. Not one could touch them. It was when they departed from God, that their distress came. So now, walking in God's way we are safe. Look at Joseph and Daniel. Whether they were in the prison or the lions' den, they were safe; God was with them. If we are walking in God's way, he is our father and our friend. All things will work for our good, and heaven will be at the end of the journey. The way to the top of many a beautiful mountain, is up a rugged path; but the view at the top, pays for all the toil. So, if the road to heaven be attended with difficulties, the end pays for all. If a man will not walk in the way, he will never reach the place.

"The holy to the holiest leads,
From thence our spirits rise,
And he that in thy statutes treads,
Shall meet thee in the skies."

Little Leigh. A. S.

Fragments and Choice Sayings.

I WILL TRY TO WIN ONE.

FELLOW-CHRISTIAN, have you ever experienced the pleasure of winning a soul to Christ? If you have you are ready to affirm that the world never gave you joy like that. If you have not, are you willing to live without this joy, and without the prospect of having a single star in your heavenly crown? You admit that you are not your own, but are bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Son of God. You know Christ says, "Go work today in my vineyard." Does not love prompt you to obey this command? Suppose you resolve, "I will try to win one soul to Christ this Winter." Is that too large a work to undertake for Him who loved you and gave himself for you? Suppose every

Christian in this commonwealth should resolve and be successful in his effort. Plainly, there would be such a revival as was never known before, and which would attract the attention of the whole Christian world. The membership of our churches would be doubled, and thousands of souls saved from eternal death. If only half of Christ's professed followers should succeed, the result would still be wonderful and unprecedented.

And may not this glorious work be done, if the resolve is only made, remembered, and acted upon? Ought you not to accomplish so much for Christ in six months? Not a few, who have tasted the joy of being instrumental in the salvation of souls, will feel that they must in so long a time gain more than one trophy for Jesus. Who that calls himself a friend to Christ will not undertake to do this much? Come, my Christian brother, or sister, make the resolve, "I will try to win one soul to Christ this Winter." Renew it, and remake it every day, and act according to it; so shall your piety be deepened, your happiness and usefulness increased, and God glorified in your friend's salvation.

A SURE FOUNDATION.

"THEREFORE, saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

Thus God spoke to the people of Jerusalem of his Son; and the great salvation to be accomplished and secured by him. Thus the only refuge of safety was pointed out to them. Eighteen hundered years ago, by the death of Christ, the sure foundation of which Isaiah spoke, was laid in Zion.

The best foundation on which a building can be erected is a foundation of stone. He who builds upon a rock has a sure foundation for his house. Such a foundation for the sinner's hope is the Lord Jesus Christ. The language of the text above quoted would have great force when heard by the Lord's people in Jerusalem. In whatever direction eyes looked, they beheld strong foundations. Every day they saw the temple, and the strongholds of Zion, in whose foundations great stones were laid. As the disciples said to Jesus, so, no doubt the Jews often said to one another—"See what manner of stones, what buildings are here!" Travellers tell us of the astonishing dimensions of some of the stones that are still seen in the old walls of Jerusalem. The prophet's words, telling the Lord's people of the foundation of Zion, as a sure foundation of stone, were well calculated to fill their mind with thoughts of strength and ability.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a strong Saviour. He is mighty. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. When the heavy load of a world's guilt was laid upon him, he was able to bear it. He bore all our sins in his own body on the cross. Christ is omnipotent, because he is divine. His righteousness is sufficient for all, because it is a divine righteousness, and therefore infinitely precious. Christ is an eternal Saviour. He is the Rock of Ages. He is an unchanging Saviour.

Have you, my reader, found Christ a sure foundation?

ABOUT HEAVEN.

A LIVING divine says: "When I was a boy I thought of heaven as a great shining city, with vast walls and domes and spires, and with no one in it except white angels, who were strangers to me. By and by my little brother died; and I thought of a great city with walls and domes and spires, and a flock of cold unknown angels, and one little fellow that I was acquainted with. He was the only one I knew in heaven at that time. Then another brother died, and there were two that I knew. Then my acquaintances began to die, and the flock continually grew. But it was not until I had sent one of my little children to his Grand-parent—God—that I began to think that I had got a little in myself. A second went, a third, a fourth; and by that time I had so many acquaintances in heaven that I did not see any more walls and domes and spires, I began to think of the residents of the celestial city. And

now, there have so many of my acquaintances gone there, it sometimes seems to me that I know more in heaven than I do on earth.

WAYLAND'S DYING WORDS.

DR. WAYLAND'S last words are worthy to be preserved among the remembered utterances of the wise and the good in passing out of the world. As recorded in his memoir, he remarked shortly before his end, "I feel that my race is nearly run. I have indeed tried to do my duty. I cannot excuse myself of having neglected any known obligation. Yet all this avails nothing. I place no dependence on anything but the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ. I have never enjoyed the raptures of faith vouchsafed to many Christians. I do not undervalue those feelings, but it has not pleased God to bestow them upon me. I have, however, a confident hope that I am accepted in the Beloved." How simple and child-like, and yet how superior to all "the wisdom of the world" is this in such an hour!

Correspondence.

COLLECTION—AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

DEAR SIR.—As a very old reader of "*The Primitive*," would you oblige me by the insertion of the subjoined query.

"Is it Scriptural to make a collection after the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and to apply the amount so obtained to the general purposes of the church?"

I only know of two instances of the kind, one of which has recently become an Open Communion church, and in that particular instance the practice of thus appropriating the funds so collected, arose from the fact, that at the time the church was formed, (one of the oldest in the metropolis), there were no *members* in circumstances requiring pecuniary assistance, and although for some years I was privileged to hold office in that same church, and repeatedly protested against such appropriation, was unable unless at the cost of peace to make any effort to remedy what I considered a misappropriation of the amounts so received.

If we are to make a trading speculation of one of the most solemn ordinances of Christ's church by investing a few shillings in wine, and a few pence in bread, what becomes of our high and holy principles? No church ought to get into debt, without a good prospect, (a certain prospect) of meeting all its claims, but for churches to become monthly retailers (in small quantities) of wine with the express view of realising some six or eight hundred per cent. upon the required outlay, is most assuredly as much opposed to the spirit and genius of Christianity as any two opposing elements possibly can be, this I give as my view of the case.

I am Sir,

Yours,

BETA.

London, Jan. 4th.

Page for the Young.

THE GOLD NECKLACE.

ON her plain little cot in the almshouse at D——, Jennie Burnet lay dying. Only a few months before, she was at school, poor, despised and persecuted. How my heart aches as I write these words! As they stood at the open grave of their schoolmate, what would the children at D—— have given to recall a few short weeks of their school life! At best, we merely tolerated the children from the almshouse. Away down on the lowest seat, at the foot of the inclined plane, they sat, a motley company of coarsely dressed and, too often, ill behaved

children. But we looked upon Jennie as a thief. O, why did not her sweet, truthful face convince us of our cruel error.

Susan Smith had worn a string of gold beads at school one afternoon, and just as the bell rang for recess, she broke the string and the beads rolled down into the floor. There was a general rush for the lost treasure, and Susan exclaimed in loud and excited tones.

"Give them to me. I had forty of them."

"Close the door," said the teacher, "and let no one go out."

Twenty-nine, thirty. "Where are the rest?"

There was no answer.

"Whoever has those beads will give them to me at once," said the teacher, "or I shall search your pockets."

None of us saw a wicked little hand extended toward Jennie Burnet. No one but God, and Anna Mellen, knew that that hand dropped ten gold beads, into the pocket of the unsuspecting child. But when they were discovered there, we heeded not the poor child's protestations of innocence, but believed that she added a lie to the dreadful sin of theft. After that, we shunned her, and, contrary to the example of the blessed Saviour, we taunted her with her supposed sin. Alone she sat in our seasons of play, with her well-worn Testament before her, and a look upon her calm face which we did not in the least understand. But at times, deep anguish was depicted there, and she daily grew thinner and paler.

One cold night the teacher was locking the door. A little shivering form lingered near,

"Please teacher, I did not take those beads," murmured a voice too sad to belong to a child.

"Don't add lies to your other sins," said the teacher, who believed her guilty. Slowly Jennie turned away.

"Oh my God, you know I never took those beads," moaned the child, and with the thought a great wave of comfort rolled over her heart. "When I go home to my mother all will be right," whispered she. Home for Jennie was heaven, for she had no mother on earth, and her drunken father was always a terror to her. A time was coming when Anna Mellen was to be reminded of her sin. Sliding upon the pond one day, the ice broke and she fell in. No one dared venture to her aid, no one but Jennie Burnet. The others fled panic-stricken for help. Jennie felt no fear, and finally succeeded in rescuing Anna from her perilous position. Both children were taken home, and Jennie, hastily putting on a dry suit, ran to Mr. Mellen's to see if she could do something for Anna, who was badly chilled. The chill had passed away and Anna was in a high fever when Jennie arrived. Teacher and scholars stood around her bed.

"Don't come near me Jennie Burnet, don't," moaned she, imploringly.

"I thought, I hoped," said Jennie, "that you would let me love you only a very little now, Anna."

"I can't bear it, oh, I can't bear it," exclaimed Anna.

"What?" asked her mother.

"Why to think that she saved my life, when I put those beads in her pocket and made everybody believe she is a thief. I did it Jennie Burnet, I did it teacher, I did it girls, all, and Jennie has always been a good girl."

Yes, one of the Saviour's little ones walking among us in white raiment, only our "eyes were holden" that we should not know her. Such a conviction flashed upon our minds at that moment. Our teacher drew the slight form to her heart, and kissed her again and again, and each one murmured simultaneously, "I love you, Jennie Burnet." And so in that bare room in the almshouse, young friends watched her slumbers and vied with each other in kind attentions to the dying one. And she felt that her earthly cup was full, as she passed away to the enjoyment of that heavenly love, which shall fully satisfy the yearning of our immortal spirits.

Reviews.

A Refutation of the Personal Reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a Vindication of the Restoration of the Jews. In twelve letters to a Friend. By H. W. MORTIMER. Second edition. Enlarged. Cloth. Pp. 340. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C.

THESE letters were written in the colony of Victoria, in Australia; were published and extensively read there; and are now republished in England.

Their argument is, that "the spiritual reign of Christ is the only millenium we shall ever have on the earth in its present polluted state." (Intro. iv). At the same time the author says: "While I can nowhere discover the personal reign throughout the Bible, I most heartily believe in the restoration of God's ancient people to the land of their fathers, founded both on the promises and declarations of God's word to that people." (P. 230.)

In both these views we cordially agree with the author. It is the fashion of millenarians to affirm, that no one can consistently hold the restoration of the Jews who does not also receive the personal reign of Christ upon the earth. With Mr. Mortimer, we altogether repudiate this assumption. The spiritual reign doctrine is perfectly compatible with the restoration of the Jews to their own land.

Mr. Mortimer is a "layman," he tells us. Whatever he is, he wields a vigorous and facile pen; and we cordially commend his book to the thoughtful study of our readers. The style is by no means finished, but the argument is cogent, which is the chief matter in a controversial work.

The Gospel in the Book of Joshua. Second edition. Cloth. Pp. 136. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS book is brought out in a really elegant form, and its contents are in many respects in keeping with the beautiful style of publication. It is a deeply interesting book. The diction is chaste. The spirit that pervades it is devout and pious. The expositions are very ingenious and original. But they often struck us as being fanciful, forced, far-fetched, and arbitrary, however beautiful they may appear. We think, too, that the writer confounds perfect justification by Christ, with the gradual and progressive sanctification of our natures by the Holy Spirit of God. Believers, while in the flesh, that is, while alive here, are not perfectly sanctified, though their union to Christ secures their *ultimate* attainment of this blessing. On this point the author seems to us to have imbibed the errors of the Plymouth brethren.

With these drawbacks we have read the book with great pleasure.

The History of Balaam. In Five Discourses. By Rev. W. ROBERTS. Cloth. Pp. 128. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C.

IT is a healthy sign that so many excellent *expository* sermons have lately come from the press. The Old Testament has never yet received attention of this kind proportioned to its claims. Its narratives are, we believe, a mine of spiritual wealth that has been but little worked.

Mr. Roberts presents us with five thoughtful and deeply interesting discourses, on the History of Balaam, as a contribution towards the illustration of Old Testament narrative. Our author treats this interesting episode in ancient inspired history with a skilful hand. He is a firm believer in the historic truthfulness of the entire narrative with all its supernatural elements, and deduces from it lessons which all may study with advantage. It is a vigorous, good book.

Pearls from the Golden Stream. Vol. for 1868. Cloth. Pp. 192. London: Houlston and Wright, 65, Paternoster row, E.C.

A DEEPLY interesting little volume, cram full of good things for young folks, and old ones too.

The Irish Church. A Lecture by REV. J. W. LANCE, of Newport, Monmouths. Newport: E. Palmer and Son. Pp. 24. Price threepence. A MANLY vigorous utterance on the great question of the day.

Topics for Teachers. Part II. Price Threepence. London: Elliot Stock. THIS second part is devoted to a continuation of the Zoology of Scripture. It is fully equal to the first in interest and value. The eighteen parts when completed will be a valuable little Biblical Cyclopædia.

We have also received the following:—

The Methodist Quarterly: a Journal of Theological and general Literature. December, 1868. Price 1s. London: Elliot Stock. Also,

The Scattered Nation. The Church. The Hive. The Appeal, &c., for December, and January

We have also received:—

The Gospel Magazine. Collingridge. *The Scattered Nation.* E. Stock; with *The Hive*; *The Church*; and *The Appeal*; all by E. Stock.

We would also mention with special commendation:—*Topics for Teachers.* Parts I. and III., by the same house. This is a *publication* which cannot be too widely circulated.

Intelligence.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIMS FOR 1869.

AT a meeting of the Roman Catholic "National Association," held at Dublin, on Tuesday, January 12th, letters were read from Cardinal Cullen, Archbishop Leahy, and Bishop O'Hea, stating what the Roman Catholics expect of the present government, and "warning" it of the dangers which will follow, if what they esteem "justice" on these points, is not done. Resolutions were passed at the meeting in accordance with the views expressed in these letters, and petitions to Parliament, based on them, were agreed to. The points mentioned in the letters are three; the first, "perfect religious equality;" the second, "justice to the tenant without injustice to the landlord;" and the third, the gift of public money for the support of the "Catholic Education" of Catholic children, and for the support of a Roman Catholic University identified with the religious tenets of the people. The last of these objects—education, will probably be the great difficulty of the government. It is obvious that if a large part of the revenues withdrawn from the Established church in Ireland, be given to support strictly Roman Catholic education, the effect will be to give the endowment which is withdrawn from one religious body to another religious body, which will use it for a RELIGIOUS OBJECT under the name of EDUCATION. It seems from the letters read at this meeting, that the authorities of the Roman Catholic church will not be satisfied, and are instructing the people that they ought not to be satisfied, unless the funds to be withdrawn from the Established church are largely devoted to the support of Roman Catholic schools, and a Roman Catholic University. This difficulty will be forced into notice by the demand now made, that endowed education in Ireland shall be "denominational," as "in other parts of the empire." For though the system which is demanded by the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy, as "denominational," is very different from that which now exists in England; yet to whatever extent the system of education which shall be supported in England by public funds, shall be, in effect, the means of endowing religion under the name of education, to that extent must Popery be, in effect, endowed in Ireland, by the system of endowed education which must on the ground of "equality" and justice be established there. Mr. W. Arthur, now of Belfast, in a letter to the *Daily News* of January 16th, puts and answers the question, "What bearing would a grant of national money to the Roman Catholic bishops

in Ireland for DENOMINATIONAL schools have upon FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE?" In answering this question, he gives the following extracts from a letter addressed by Irish prelates to Sir George Grey, and printed in a Parliamentary paper, March 5th, 1866. In that letter, they demand that the "FULLNESS of distinctive RELIGIOUS teaching shall ENTER INTO the course of daily SECULAR education, with full liberty for the performance of RELIGIOUS EXERCISES, and the use of RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS; and to recognise the right of the LAWFUL PASTORS of such [denominational] schools to have access to them to regulate the whole business of religious instruction in them, and to REMOVE OBJECTIONABLE BOOKS." They say that in their proposed denominational system "religious instruction could be blended with secular;" and that "many Catholic schools of nuns, monks, and others, could be taken into connection with the board." They say that in the proposed denominational schools "the TEACHERS should be Catholic; the BOOKS treating of religious, moral, and historical matters, Catholic; the INSPECTORS Catholic; and, if objectionable, subject to the veto of the Catholic bishop of the diocese in which their duties would lie." Also that book grants "should be grants of MONEY, not, as now, of books; in order that the managers might be free in making a selection of the books to be used."

This outline of the denominational system which is demanded is sufficient to show why the Roman Catholic prelates attach much more importance to the gift of aid to Roman Catholic education, than they do to either the disestablishment of the church of England in Ireland, or to justice to the Irish tenantry.

Cardinal Cullen said in his letter to the National Association meeting of January 12th:—"We claim what we are entitled to by the strictest principles of justice, when we ask for Catholic children Catholic education, under that denominational training which exists in other parts of this empire."

Archbishop Leahy said, "If the church and the land questions vitally affect the legal and material *status* of Catholics, the education question, as regards the future of Catholicity in Ireland, must be considered by any one having the smallest degree of foresight as the question of questions;" and if Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright should not satisfy the "hopes" of Ireland on any of these three points, then, the Archbishop says, "let England get engaged in a Continental or American struggle—not an improbable contingency — the re-action among Irishmen at home and abroad would be terrific and irresistible. . . . They would cheerfully seize on the long-wished for opportunity, and, in their onward movement of vengeance they would respect neither the advice, nor the ministry, nor the lives of those who stood in their way." These are the words of one who knows what Roman Catholics are, and whose words greatly influence what they do. He tells us that if their wishes on these points are not gratified, they will take "VENGEANCE" on their Protestant fellow-countrymen; that such an opportunity has been "LONG-WISHED-FOR," and will be "CHEERFULLY" seized; and that they will not spare the "LIVES of those who stand in their way." The Archbishop says that his words are "words not of menace but of warning;" but at all events, he uses them as the means of enforcing a regard for the wishes of those who, he says, will act thus if their wishes are disregarded.

Bishop O'Hea referred more expressly to the use to be made of the funds to be taken from the established church. He said, "Let Mr. Gladstone beware as to the use to which the revenues of the disendowed church shall be converted;" and proceeded to argue at length in favour of a system of education which would include a Roman Catholic University for Ireland, and one THOROUGHLY IDENTIFIED WITH THE RELIGIOUS TENETS OF THE PEOPLE.

These particulars respecting the meeting of January 12th, are taken from a report in the *Daily News* of January 14th.

W. N.

IMMERSION STILL BINDING BY THE LAW OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE decision of the Privy Council in the suit Martin *v.* Mackonochie seems to have placed all the members of the Church of England in difficulty. The design of the suit was to prove that four practices of the Romanising clergy in the Church of England are unlawful—that is, 1, *kneeling* before the bread and wine when "consecrated;" 2, using *lighted candles* on the communion table; 3, using *incense* when celebrating the communion, and 4, mixing *water* with the wine. The judge of the Arches Court decided that the third and fourth things—the use of incense and water were offences against the ecclesiastical law, but not the kneeling and the use of lighted candles. An appeal was made to the Privy Council against this part of his judgment, and the Privy Council has reversed it. It has declared all the four things to be unlawful, and adjudged Mr. Mackonochie to pay the whole of the costs, both of the court below and of the appeal.

So far the triumph is great for those who are opposing these Romanising practices; and also for truth itself, for kneeling is practised as an act of worship designed to teach the "real presence" of Christ in the bread and wine after prayer by a priest; and lighted candles are avowedly used to denote his "real presence" in them also. But the Privy Council had to decide whether the act of kneeling, and the use of lighted candles, apart from the *purpose* for which they are used, are a violation of the strict letter of the ecclesiastical laws. The Council in giving judgment, said that it is not open either to a minister of the church, or to the Privy Council itself, to "draw a distinction, in acts which are a departure from, or violation of the Rubric, between those which are *important*, and those which appear to be *trivial*;" that it was the object of the Statute of Uniformity to produce "a universal agreement" in worship, and that this object would be frustrated if each minister "were to be at liberty to *omit*, to *add to*, or to *alter*, any of those details;" that though "there may be articles not expressly mentioned in the Rubric the use of which would not be restrained, they must be articles which are *consistent with* and *subsidiary* to the services."

These rules, if they referred to laws made by God instead of by man, would be an admirable exposition of the manner in which he requires us to treat them. But many of the laws to which absolute and exact obedience is thus required by the decision of the Privy Council are not only laws made by man, but are *many of them violated by all parties in the church of England*. The result is that actions might be sustained against the Evangelical clergy as well as against the Romanising and other clergy, for violating them. The Romanising clergy, for instance, stand *before* the table to consecrate the bread and wine, with their *backs to the people*; they do so on account of their belief in the "real presence;" but this position is according to law, and the disuse of it by the rest of the clergy is unlawful. They use certain vestments called "sacrificial vestments," which others have laid aside. One of them says "the most tempting vengeance would be to compel them [the evangelicals] to wear the hated sacrificial vestments."

At a meeting of the Romanising clergy in London on the 12th of January, an elaborate report was presented in which a list was given of various things in which there has been a general addition to, or disuse of, what the Rubric requires. Among thirteen of the present usages which are said to be illegal, are 1, the use of any metrical hymn or psalm whatsoever, except the *Veni Creator* at ordinations and an anthem. 5. The recitation in the Lord's Supper, of the words of administration to more than one person at a time. 9. The administration of confirmation by the Bishop without laying his hand on the head of every one severally; and using the prescribed words to each person.

Among the nine practices which are named as being, though now neglected, made compulsory, by implication by this judgment of the Privy Council, are 1, The daily recitation of morning and evening prayer by all priests and

deacons. 3. The use of "the eucharistic vestments" ordered by the first Prayer book, A.D. 1549. 5. The posture of "standing before" the Lord's Table during the whole prayer of consecration. 8. "Immersion, in baptism, unless weakness be certified."

This "report" complains that "a partial or one-sided enforcement of the principles of the judgment would be a grievous injustice;" and that on the other hand "the exaction of a rigid uniformity must be productive of great vexation and mischief," and would involve "great contradictions and practical difficulties."

What, in the midst of these difficulties, will be done? Will infants be immersed? Will hymns cease to be sung? Will the Rubric be in all things obeyed? No one seems to expect it. One of the Romanising clergy has given this advice to his brethren, "Let us be very cautious of making too much of the anti-puritanical aspects of the judgment. If we set on foot a counter persecution we should instantly have a Bill run through Parliament for revising the Rubric; but by a judicious and good humoured use of Lord Cairns' ruling, *as a raw*, we can cover our foes with ignominy and render them thoroughly despicable to the public eye."

Mr. Mackonochie, one of the parties to the suit, has said that he believes the time has come when the Church of England must seek to be delivered altogether from the burden of union with the state; and one of his opponents has expressed a belief that "if the Ritualists remain in the church, they will, to a man, strenuously ally themselves with the Liberation Society to break up the present establishment, that they may be the better able to mould the English Church after their Popish model."

May the entire separation of Church and State be hastened by these events.

W. N.

ORDINATION SERVICES.

On Tuesday, the 9th of February, Mr. E. Cossey was ordained pastor of the Baptist Church, meeting in Bethel Chapel, Shipley. The services were commenced in the afternoon at two o'clock, by Rev. Mr. Horn, of Idle, giving out the well known hymn,

"Kindred in Christ for his dear sake,"

after which, the Scriptures were read, and prayer offered by the Rev. E. Goodman, of Keighley.

The Rev. E. Parker, of Farsley, stated the nature and constitution of a Christian church. The usual question, as to the position of the church was asked by the Rev. J. Bloomfield, of Bradford, and was answered by Mr. J. Walker, one of the deacons, who said that the church was established in the year 1759, and up to the year 1866 more than one thousand names had been inscribed upon its books. Many years previous to that time, the accommodation had been very deficient, and in that year, a new chapel was erected in Rosse street. Upwards of two hundred members were dismissed to form the new church there, and their minister, the Rev. R. Green, resigned his pastorate over the old to take charge of the new cause. The pulpit was supplied by neighbouring ministers, and they would gratefully acknowledge the assistance they gave; but notwithstanding the excellence of the preachers, there was a strong desire for a settled pastor. In March of last year, the Rev. E. Parker was preaching for the church, and mentioned that Mr. Cossey was supplying for him. He was a student under the auspices of the Bury College, but was studying under the Rev. T. Dawson, of Liverpool; previous to that, he was a member of the church at Meards' Court, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. Bloomfield, now of Bradford. Mr. Cossey was invited to supply the pulpit, and did so on the 6th of April, he was again invited to preach, which he did; and afterwards was invited to preach four Sundays, and having done so, a special church meeting was called, and it was decided to invite him to the pastorate. Mr. Walker concluded by saying that the prayer of the church was that their minister might be made very useful in the strengthening of God's people, and in the salvation of souls.

Mr. Cossey having answered the questions that were addressed to him,

Mr. Dowson on the part of the ministers present, gave him the right hand of fellowship, and addressed a few very earnest words to his young brother.

The ordination prayer was then very impressively offered by the Rev. R. Holmes, of Rawden.

The charge to the pastor was delivered by the Rev. T. Dawson, of Liverpool—Mr. Cossey's tutor—who said it devolved upon him to address his young friend, and he hoped his words would be of use to him, and to the whole of the congregation. When he received their kind invitation to take part in that service, he took up the New Testament, and endeavoured carefully to peruse the two epistles to Timothy and the one to Titus, that he might find some suitable points which might give direction to his address. He would not on that occasion attempt anything like a sermon.

The first four chapters of the epistle to Timothy struck him very forcibly, particularly the expression, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ," and no one could read over these without being very forcibly struck with the very deep interest manifested by the writer in the welfare of Timothy as a Christian man, and as a Christian minister. He thought it would not be presumption on his part to say that the members of that church, the deacons of that church, and all his dear brethren then present, and the members of the churches in the neighbourhood sympathised with his young brother, and earnestly desired that he might maintain a good character, and deserve the appellation of a good minister of Jesus Christ. A good minister of Jesus Christ must necessarily be a good man; he must be a convert himself, and know something of the sorrow for sin. He must not forget the necessity for personal religion, neither must he forget the necessity there was for him to disseminate the duties of Christianity. He must be a man who deeply felt the truth of what he preached, for he believed that God never called a man to the ministry of the Gospel who did not first believe the gospel. A good minister of Jesus Christ would visit his congregation, and would endeavour to become acquainted with their cares, their trials, and their afflictions. If he did this, he would never lack subjects for sermons. Those who took up the profession of the Christian ministry as a post of ease, a mere post of honour, had never rightly thought upon the nature of that important work, and had mistaken their calling altogether. The work of a minister was very laborious. The very highest attainments in science and in literature were to be desired, and he must labour to get knowledge for the purpose of imparting it. He must be faithful—that was, he must speak the truth, and the whole truth, both in doctrine and in practice.

In conclusion, he would counsel his young friend to evade the feeling of pride, and to exhibit humility; to shew deference to age, and to avoid everything that might damage his reputation; for, as "dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour, so did a little folly him that was in reputation." He would have his young brother maintain the most friendly relations with his brethren in the ministry, and not to be discouraged; for he had a Good Master and a good work, and would in the end receive a good reward. Some, perhaps, would ask, who is sufficient for these things? He would reply, we are, and that our sufficiency is of God. He hoped that his dear brother would labour bravely on, and that he might die in his harness, and in the words of Paul he would say, "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit."

After singing a few verses, the afternoon services, which had been well attended, were concluded by the Rev. H. Dowson, of Bury, pronouncing the benediction.

The Ladies had provided an excellent tea in the school-room, which was beautifully decorated. Upwards of 500 sat down to the tables, and owing to the very excellent arrangements, there was but little confusion.

At the public meeting in the evening, the chair was taken by the newly

elected pastor, who commenced the service by a few words of prayer, and then gave out the grand old hymn, commencing,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,"

after which, most excellent addresses were given by the Rev. H. Dowson on "The duties of church members to the pastor;" the Rev. J. P. Chown on "The duties of members to one another;" the Rev. T. Michael, of Halifax, on "The duties of church members to the world; the Rev. J. Parker, of Salendine Nook, on "The importance of seeking the conversion of the young," and by the Rev. R. Green, of Shipley, on "Gratitude and confidence." After singing the well known hymn beginning—

"Come, Christian brethren, ere we part,"

the chairman concluded the services of the day by pronouncing the benediction.

OGDEN, NEAR ROCHDALE.

THE annual festival of the Baptist Sunday School, Ogden, was held on the second Monday in January, when 960 partook of tea in the recently enlarged school-room. The public meeting was conducted in the chapel, which was crowded in every part. The pastor, the Rev. L. Nuttall, presided. The following report was read by the secretary:—"408 scholars and 56 teachers are now connected with the school, in addition to 108 scholars and 18 teachers at the branch school at Littleborough; 10 scholars have been baptised and added to the church during the year. The Young Men's improvement classes, under the care of the minister and Mr. Hall, of Shaw, are attended by about 50 young persons. The Tonic sol-fa singing class, numbering nearly 60 members, is making good progress, under the tuition of Mr. J. Thomas Fielding. Three sewing classes meet, conducted by Mrs. Nuttall. The Sunday School Burial Society, numbering 471 members." In his opening address, the chairman said that it was a matter of profound gratitude to Almighty God that the school and congregation still enjoyed increasing prosperity, and that during the past year they had been enabled by the Divine blessing to realise three objects, which at their last annual gathering were spoken of as being very desirable, namely, the enlarging of the Sunday-school, the building of a neat chapel and school for their branch cause at Littleborough, and the erection of a new organ at Ogden. Several other addresses were delivered by the Rev. J. Harvey, Messrs. Clegg, Whitehead, Schofield, and Smith. Recitations and dialogues were given in a satisfactory manner by the scholars. Selections of Music were creditably sung by the singing class and choir. A bazaar stall, opened the same day for the sale of articles made by the sewing class, realised over £20 of net profits, which will be appropriated towards paying a yearly instalment in liquidation of a small debt upon the chapel. Chiefly by the efforts of the young women the debt has been reduced from £200 to £50, the present amount.

ROCHDALE.

THE second anniversary of the Baptist church worshipping in the Lyceum, Baillie street Rochdale, was held on Tuesday, the 12th of January, in the Lecture Hall of the above named place. The proceedings commenced with public worship in the morning at half-past ten, when the Rev. H. Dowson, president of the Baptist College, Bury, preached an eloquent and impressive sermon from (2 Chron. v. 13). In the afternoon at two o'clock, the friends again assembled for prayer; the meeting conducted by the Rev. J. Webb, of Bury, (late of London), was numerously attended, and marked by earnestness and spiritual power. At half-past four an excellent tea was provided, of which about 320 partook. In the evening a public meeting was held, the Rev. H. Dowson occupying the chair. Prayer was offered by the Rev. J. Harvey, and interesting addresses were delivered by Messrs. Hagen, Pickles, Newton, and Baschlin, students of the Bury College, and by Mr. Edmund Lord, one of the deacons of the church.

The proceedings were enlivened by the services of the choir, who performed a good selection of sacred

music, consisting of airs, duets, and choruses. From the report read by the secretary Mr J. Hirst. it appears that sixteen baptised believers have been added to the church during the past year; three have been removed by death to the church above leaving a clear increase of thirteen. The present number of members on the books is eighty seven. A cordial invitation has been given to Mr. Alfred Pickles to take the pastorate of the church, which he has accepted, and it is expected that he will commence his stated labours on the first Lord's Day in next August.

WARRINGTON.

OPENING SERVICES.

On Sunday last, three sermons were preached in the Public Hall, in connection with the opening of the New Baptist Chapel, Rylands Street. The preacher in the morning and evening was the Rev. H. Dowson, and in the afternoon, Rev. J. Harvey, both of Bury. These services were moderately well attended, especially in the evening, when the body of the hall was comfortably filled, the audiences paying deep attention to the able and talented preachers. Collections were made at the close of each service, but in consequence of extra expense incurred in fitting up the chapel, £20 more is required than was at first anticipated. We shall be glad to receive assistance from any of your readers, who are able to help us. The following have been received during the month:—

	£	s.	d.
H. Kellsal, Esq.	10	0	0
Messrs. Rylands Brothers	5	0	0
Messrs. J. Crossfield & Sons	5	0	0
Mr. James England	3	0	0
Mayor of Warrington	2	0	0
Mr. A. Mackie	2	0	0
Mr. J. G. McMinnies	2	0	0
Mr. Thomas Fell	2	0	0
A Friend	2	0	0
Mr. P. Walker	2	0	0
Mr. W. D. Milner	2	0	0
Mr. Thomas Tunstall	1	0	0
Mr. Ziba Armitage	1	0	0
Mr. Thomas Bennett	1	0	0
Mr. John Bennett	1	0	0
Mr. William Bennett, junr.	1	0	0
Messrs. A. Nuttall & Son (Bury)	1	0	0
Mr. Thomas Barber	1	0	0
Mr. William Reynolds	1	0	0
Mr. Samuel Howarth, Waterbarn	1	0	0
Mr. George Hatton	1	0	0
Messrs. R. Garnett & Sons	1	0	0
Mr. C. H. Cartwright	1	0	0
Mr. Jackson, Runcorn	1	0	0
Mr. William Kershaw	0	10	0
Mr. Joseph Yarwood	0	10	0
Mr. J. W. Wilson	0	11	0
Mr. William Darbyshire	0	10	0
Mr. John Wright	0	10	0
Mr. Joseph Knowles, jun.	0	10	0
Mr. James Laverock	0	10	0
Rev. G. S. Reaney	0	10	6
Mr. James Carter	0	10	0
Mr. John Burgess	0	10	6
Mrs. Sanderson	0	10	0
Mr. Grime	0	10	0
Mr. John Brown	0	10	6
Less Sums, amounting in the aggregate to	6	16	0

MARRIAGE.

CORNER—WELLS.—Colombo, Ceylon, at the Pettah Baptist Chapel, on Monday, the 7th December, 1868, by the Rev. Henry R. Pigott, assisted by the Rev. John Silva, Mr. Robert Boston Corner, second son of the late Mr. John Corner, Deacon of the Pettah Church, to Miss Louisa Grace Wells, only daughter of the late Mr. William Thomas Wells. This being the first wedding in connection with the Strict Baptist Church after its formation, the bridal party were presented with a beautiful Family Bible, by Mr. Pigott, on behalf of the members and friends.

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

By MR. WHITEHEAD.	£	s.	d.
Mr. T. Clements, Newark ....S.	0	5	0
T. Whitaker, Esq., Blackheath ....S.	1	1	0
T. Pillow, Esq., London....S.	0	10	0
Cheltenham.			
Rev. Wm. Jackson ....S.	0	5	0
Rev. J. T. Jones ....S.	0	5	0
S. W. Fisher, Esq....S.	0	10	0
Mrs. Sims ....S.	0	10	0
Mr. J. Halsgood....S.	0	10	0
Mr. James Bloodworth ....S.	0	10	0
A Friend....S.	0	10	0
Mr. C. Boardman....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Isaac James ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. E. Underwood ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Wm. Hopwood ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. F. Beckingsale ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. Thomas Whittard....S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. C. Cooper ....S.	0	5	0
Mr. J. Bruton ....S.	0	5	0